

Fire and Emergency New Zealand Dispute Resolution Scheme

Better Together

ANNUAL REPORT | PŪRONGO Ā-TAU

June 2025 | Hune 2025



INDEPENDENT
COMPLAINT AND
REVIEW AUTHORITY

Te Umanga Arotake Amuamu Motuhake

CONTENTS | NGĀ IHIRANGI

1	Foreword He tīmitanga kōrero
2	About us
3	Year in review
3	Applications to access the Scheme
4	Process selection
5	Case status
6	Who is accessing the Scheme?
7	The nature of the disputes
7	Systemic issues, breach reporting and recommendations
8	Findings of independent review

Foreword | He tīmitanga kōrero



The Independent Complaint and Review Authority | Te Umanga Arotake Amuamu Motuhake (**ICRA**) is pleased to present this annual report to Fire and Emergency New Zealand on the delivery of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Dispute Resolution Scheme under subpart 5 of Part 4 of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 (**Scheme**). ICRA is a part of The ADR Centre, a leading nationwide provider of dispute resolution and conflict management services and is external to and independent of Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

The Scheme offers free-to-access resolution services for Fire and Emergency volunteers and members of the public. If someone has submitted a complaint to Fire and Emergency and is dissatisfied with the outcome or is concerned that the process is taking too long, they can apply to the Scheme's facilitation, mediation, and adjudication services.

This year we have been privileged to engage directly with volunteer leaders regarding the purpose of the Scheme and the resolution pathways available. These engagements

have indicated that there is still some way to go to ensure all volunteers are aware of the Scheme and their rights under it. We look forward to further upcoming opportunities to raise awareness of the Scheme with both volunteers and members of the public.

Ngā mihi,
Willem van Gent Head of Commercial,
Compliance and Complaints

ABOUT US

We provide independent complaint management and review services to individuals, businesses and Government across a wide variety of sectors.

The Independent Complaint and Review Authority (**ICRA**) is a part of [The ADR Centre](#) and was established as a specialist delivery service for:

- independent and impartial reviews of, and appeals against, decisions and determinations made by public and private sector organisations and government bodies in the exercise of their statutory powers and duties; and
- independent and impartial review and auditing of intra-organisational and extra-organisational B2B and B2C complaints processes, procedures and outcomes.

Year in Review

Applications to access the Scheme

As noted above, any potential applicant to the Scheme must typically access the Fire and Emergency New Zealand internal complaint management process before any application to the Scheme administered by ICRA may be made (or accepted).

Between the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, fourteen applications for dispute resolution were received. Thirteen applications were received from Fire and Emergency volunteers, while one application was received from a member of the public.

Nine of these applications were accepted by the Scheme Administrator. Four applications were refused due to the applicant’s failure to provide further information by the date requested. One application was withdrawn by the applicant after further information was requested.

APPLICATIONS TO ACCESS THE SCHEME

Year	Initiated by volunteer	Initiated by member of the public	Total
Applications received	13	1	14
Applications accepted	9	0	9
Applications rejected	3	1	4

Year in Review

Process selection

Under rule 20 of Fire and Emergency New Zealand Dispute Resolution Scheme Rules 2020 (**Scheme Rules**), the applicant can select their preferred dispute resolution process option. They can choose from facilitation, mediation or adjudication (including fast-track adjudication where the resolution of a matter is time-critical).

Mediation and facilitation are less formal processes. Our mediators and facilitators are skilled, experienced, impartial, and independent professionals. They are not an adviser or advocate for anyone involved in the dispute. They are there to manage the negotiation process and guide and assist the parties without giving advice, expressing opinions or making decisions. They will help the parties to identify and explore issues to be resolved and options for resolution, but ultimately the power to settle the dispute, and on what terms is in the parties’ hands.

Adjudication is a more formal determinative process. It allows the parties to put their case to an independent third party (the adjudicator), and the adjudicator will make a decision on the dispute. The adjudicator’s decision is binding, which means the parties must comply with it (subject to limited review and appeal rights). A party may also apply for fast-track adjudication if the dispute is time-critical and urgent resolution is required.

Of the total applications received during the reporting period, five applicants selected adjudication as their preferred dispute resolution method. Seven applicants chose mediation as their preferred process option. The dispute resolution process was not specified for two of the applications.

No requests for facilitation or fast-track adjudication have been received.

PROCESS SELECTED BY APPLICANT

- No process selected 14%
- Adjudication 36%
- Mediation 50%



Year in Review

Case status

Of the fourteen cases initiated during the reporting period, four cases were rejected after the applicant’s failure to provide further information by the date requested.

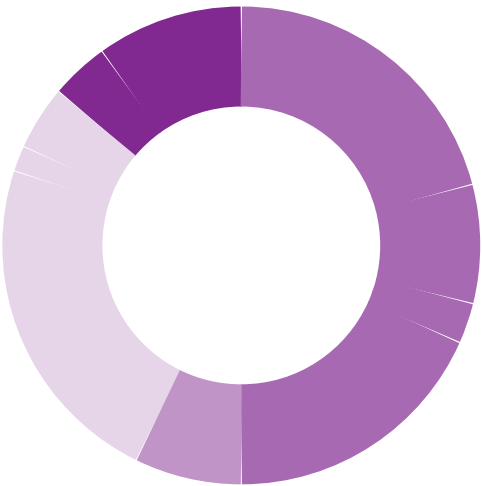
One of the cases was closed after the applicant requested to withdraw the application before acceptance.

There were two cases where mediation was held. The mediation for the cases did not result in any agreement. The applicants withdrew at the conclusion of the mediation.

Seven cases initiated during the reporting period remain open in terms of Rule 34 of the Scheme Rules.

CASES STATUS

- Mediation held, application withdrawn
- Cases open
- Withdrawn
- Refused (failure to provide further information)

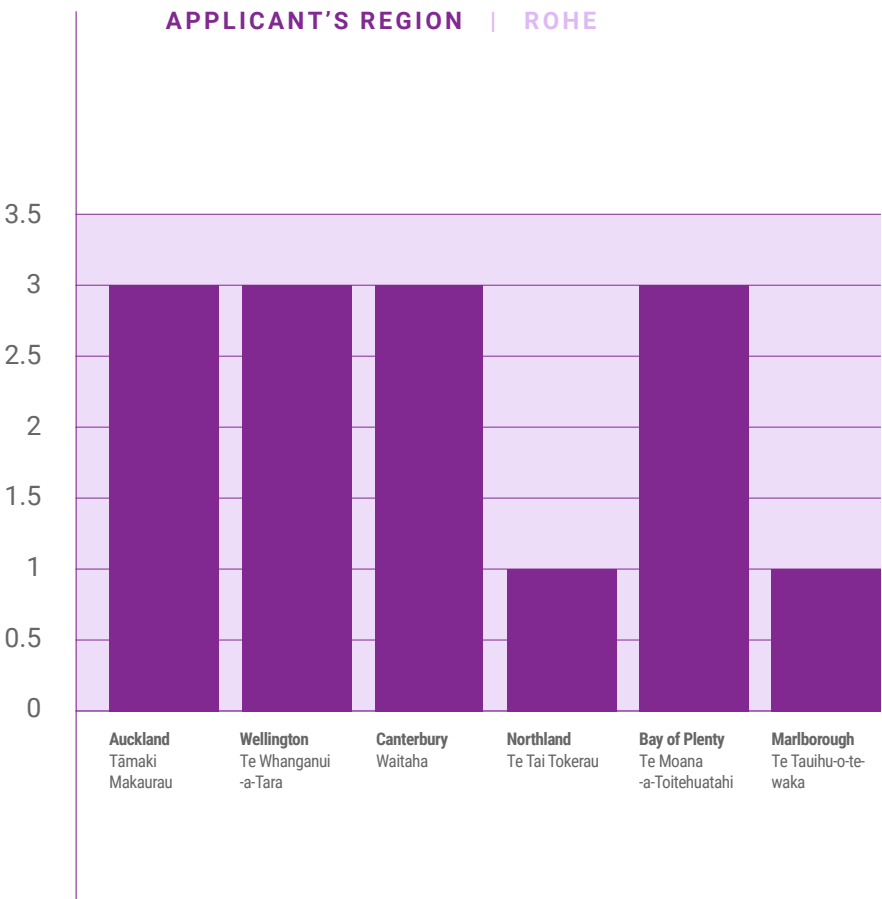


Year in Review

Who is accessing the Scheme?

The Scheme is available to both volunteer firefighters and members of the public. Thirteen of the applicants in the period between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025 were volunteer firefighters, while one application was received by a member of the public.

The applicants came from across Aotearoa New Zealand, with applications from Auckland | Tāmaki Makaurau (three), Wellington | Te Whanganui-a-Tara (three), Canterbury | Waitaha (three), Northland | Ōtākou (one) Bay of Plenty | Te Moana-a-Toitehuatahi (three) | Marlborough | Te Taihū-o-te-waka (one).



Year in Review

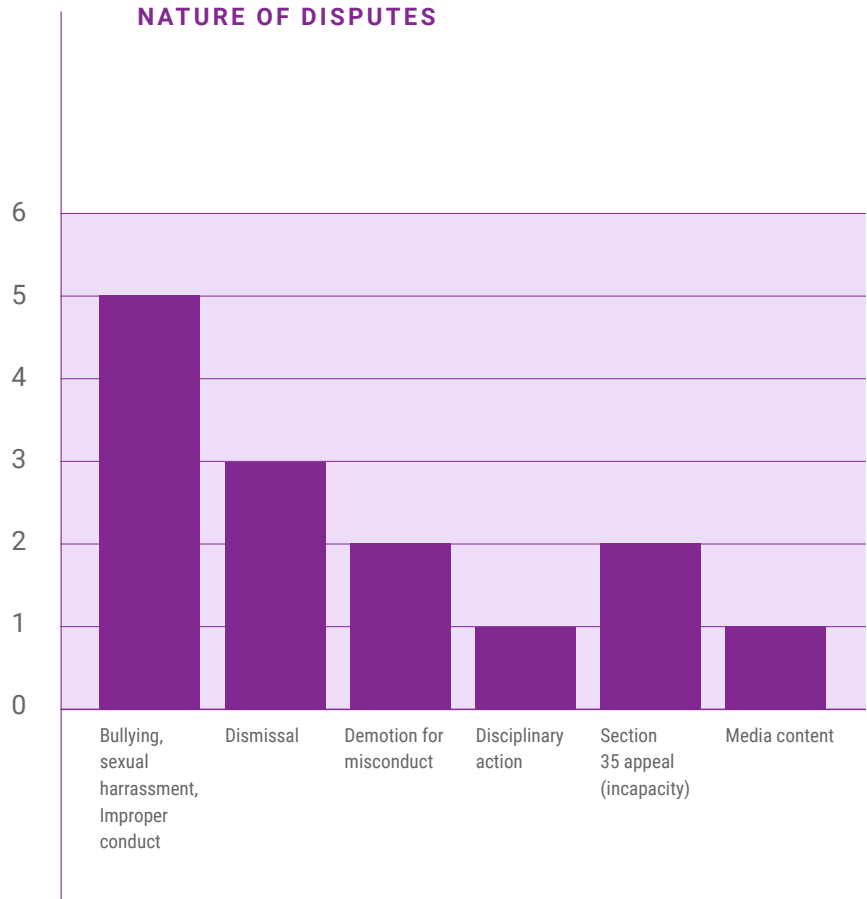
The nature of the disputes

Of the fourteen applications, five cases involved allegations of bullying, sexual harassment or improper behaviour. Three cases sought a review of dismissal from FENZ. Two were appeals against a requirement to leave FENZ compulsorily (incapacity) under section 35 of the Act. Two sought a review of demotions based on allegations of misconduct. One sought review of disciplinary action. One was a complaint about media content.

Systemic issues, breach reporting and recommendations

There were no breaches of the Scheme Rules by Fire and Emergency New Zealand or Fire and Emergency New Zealand personnel.

There were no recommendations made by adjudicators to Fire and Emergency New Zealand under rule 37 of the Scheme Rules as to actions that it should take to prevent similar problems occurring in the future.



Findings of independent review

No independent review was completed during the reporting period.

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